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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0911
INFO RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 0016

UNCLAS ATHENS 001585

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS
SCA/A FOR TOM GRAMAGLIA
FOR S/SRAP
FOR F BUREAU
EEB/IFD/ODF FOR ROLAND DEMARCELLUS & RACHEL LEATHAM
USAID/EE FOR BOB ICHORD
USAID/ANE FOR JIM DEVER

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [ECON](#) [PREL](#) [GR](#) [EAID](#) [AF](#)
SUBJECT: ACTION REQUEST: GREECE TO U.S.: "HELP US HELP YOU IN
AFGHANISTAN!"

REF: A. ATHENS 1331; B. SERIES OF EMAILS TO SCA/A (AUGUST 5-7, 2009)

11. (U) This is an action request; see paragraph 4.

12. (SBU) In a meeting with DepEconCouns and USAID/E&E representatives on October 22, Ambassador Karafotias, the Director-General of Hellenic Aid (HA), made a very pointed request-the latest in a long line of requests-for specific projects on which the Greeks might work with the U.S. in Afghanistan. While in the past, HA has said that they had a portion of their 4 million euro Afghanistan pledge available for such a joint project(s) with the U.S. (reftels A and B), Ambassador Karafotias indicated to DepEconCouns and USAID that HA had available as much as 8 million euros. He expressed once more that Greece really wants to work with the U.S. in Afghanistan, both to show how Greece supports the new Administration's foreign policy objectives and also to learn from a country with more development assistance expertise. Ambassador Karafotias indicated that they needed information from the U.S. ASAP, as the money they have available expires at the end of this year, and HA is not sure what they will have available next year.

13. (SBU) HA and USAID already are working together in the Balkans, helping to identify, build capacity, and develop energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. Ambassador Karafotias and others in the MFA and HA have indicated several times that they would like to expand this development cooperation to other countries and different types of projects. Since the former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dora Bakoyannis, met with Secretary Clinton earlier this year, Post's MFA and HA interlocutors have expressed a desire to work with the U.S. in Afghanistan on projects in the areas of health and education, potentially with a focus on women and children. HA finds partnering or co-funding projects in Afghanistan with other donors a more efficient use of Greece's limited funding, since HA does not have a presence on the ground (not even an embassy), and establishing one would increase their administrative costs, leaving little leftover for actual program funding. HA has opted to stop funding trust funds and programs run by international organizations (including the World Food Program) because it would like visible credit for its development work (something on which they can put the Greek version of the USAID hand-clasp brand). According to Ambassador Karafotias, the GoG already is cooperating in Afghanistan with the Hungarians on technical assistance in the agriculture sector and is considering cooperating with the Canadians on a child vaccination program. The Greeks have also been approached by Lithuania, the United Kingdom, and Iceland and are considering co-funding various projects with each of these countries. Ambassador Karafotias made clear that

their first choice for cooperation and co-funding of projects in Afghanistan is with the U.S.

14. (SBU) ACTION REQUEST. Post asks Washington to consider the Greek request to work together in Afghanistan and to provide one or more projects we can pass to the Greeks. If this is not feasible, Post asks for a point of contact in Washington with whom the Greeks can work to develop their plans. Feedback by November 6 would be appreciated.
Speckhard